A DISCOVRSE OF LIFE AND DEATH.

Written in French by Phil. Mornay.

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A DISCOVRSE OF LIFE AND death, *written in French by Phil. Mornay, Sieur du Pleſsis Marly.*

IT ſeemes to me ſtrange, and a thing much to be marueiled, that the laborer to repoſe himſelfe haſteneth as it were the courſe of the Sunne: that the Mariner rowes with all force to attaine the port, & with a ioyfull crie ſalutes the deſcried land: that the traueller is neuer quiet nor content till he be at the end of his voyage: & that we in the meane while tied in this world to a perpetuall taske, toſſed with continuall tempeſt, tyred with a rough &

comberſome way, cānot yet ſee the end of our labour but with griefe, nor behold our port but with teares, nor approch our home and quiet abode but with horrour and trembling. This life is but a *Penelopes* web, wherin we are alwayes doing & vndoing: a ſea open to all winds, which ſometime within, ſometime without neuer ceaſe to torment vs: a wearie iourney through extreame heats, and colds, ouer high mountaines, ſteepe rockes, and theeuiſh deſerts. And ſo we terme it in weauing at this web, in rowing at this oare, in paſſing this miſerable way. Yet loe when death comes to end our worke, whē ſhe ſtretcheth out her armes to pull vs into the port, when after ſo many dangerous paſſages, and lothſome lodgings ſhe would

would conduct vs to our true home and resting place: in steede of reioycing at the end of our labour, of taking cõfort at the sight of our land, of singing at the approch of our happie mansion, we would faine, (who would beleeue it?) retake our worke in hand, we would againe hoise saile to the wind, and willingly vndertake our iourney anew. No more thẽ remember we our paines, our shipwracks & dangers are forgotten: we feare no more the trauailes nor the theeues. Cõtrariwise, we apprehẽd death as an extreame paine, we doubt it as a rocke, we flie it as a thiefe. We do as litle childrẽ, who all the day complaine, & when the medicine is brought them, are no longer sicke: as they who all the weeke long runne vp & downe the

streetes with paine of the teeth, and seeing the Barber comming to pull them out, feele no more paine: as those tender & delicate bodies, who in a pricking pleurisie complaine, crie out, and cannot stay for a Surgion, and when they see him whetting his Launcet to cut the throate of the disease, pull in their armes, & hide them in the bed, as if he were come to kill them. We feare more the cure then the disease, the Surgion thē the paine, the stroke then the impostume. We haue more sence of the medicines bitternesse soone gone, thē of a bitter lāguishing lōg continued: more feeling of death the end of our miseries, then the endlesse miserie of our life. And whence proceedeth this follie and simplicitie? we neither know life, nor

nor death. We feare that we ought to hope for, and wish for that we ought to feare. We call life a continuall death: and death the issue of a liuing death, and the entrance of a neuer dying life. Now what good, I pray you, is there in life, that we should so much pursue it? or what euil is there in death, that we should so much eschue it? Nay what euill is there not in life? and what good is there not in death? Consider all the periods of this life. We enter it in teares, we passe it in sweate, we end it in sorow. Great and litle, rich and poore, not one in the whole world, that cā pleade immunitie frō this cōdition. Mā in this point worse then all other creatures, is borne vnable to support himselfe: neither receiuing in his first yeares any plea-

sure, nor giuing to others but annoy and displeasure, & before the age of discretion passing infinite dangers. Onely herein lesse vnhappie then in other ages, that he hath no sence nor apprehension of his vnhappinesse. Now is there any so weake minded, that if it were granted him to liue alwayes a child, would make account of such a life? So then it is euident that not simplie to liue is a good, but well and happily to liue. But proceede. Growes he? with him grow his trauailes. Scarcely is he come out of his nurses hands, scarcely knowes what it is to play, but he falleth into the subiection of some Schoolemaister: I speake but of those which are best and most precisely brought vp. Studies he? it is euer with repining. Playes he? neuer

uer but with feare. This whole age while he is vnder the charge of ano ther, is vnto him but as a prison. He onely thinkes, and onely aspires to that time when freed from the ma-stership of another, he may become maister of himself: pushing onward (as much as in him lies) his age with his shoulder, that soone he may en-ioy his hoped libertie. In short, he desires nothing more then the end of this base age, and the beginning of his youth. And what else I pray you is the beginning of youth, but the death of infancie? the beginning of mãhood, but the death of youth? the beginning of to morow, but the death of to day? In this sort thẽ desires he his death, and iudgeth his life miserable: and so cannot be re-puted in any happinesse or contẽt-

ment. Behold him now, according to his wish, at libertie: in that age, wherein *Hercules* had the choise, to take the way of vertue or of vice, reason or passion for his guide, and of these two must take one. His passion entertaines him with a thousand delights, prepares for him a thousand baites, presents him with a thousand worldly pleasures to surprize him: and few there are that are not beguiled. But at the reckonings end, what pleasures are they? pleasures ful of vice which hold him still in a restlesse feauer: pleasures subiect to repentance, like sweete meates of hard digestion: pleasures bought with paine and perill, spent and past in a moment, and followed with a long and lothsome remorse of conscience. And this is the very nature

nature (if they be well examined) of all the pleaſures of this world. There is in none ſo much ſweetnes, but there is more bitterneſſe: none ſo pleaſant to the mouth, but leaues an vnſauery after-taſt and lothſome diſdaine: none (which is worſe) ſo moderated but hath his coroſiue, & caries his puniſhment in it ſelfe. I will not here ſpeake of the diſpleaſures confeſſed by all, as quarels, debates, woundes, murthers, baniſhments, ſickneſſe, perils, whereinto ſometimes the incontinencie, ſometimes the inſolēcie of this ill guided age conductes him. But if thoſe that ſeeme pleaſures, be nothing elſe but diſpleaſures: if the ſweetneſſe thereof be as an infuſiō of wormewood: it is plaine enough what the diſpleaſure is they feele, and how great the

bitternesse that they tast. Behold in summe the life of a yong man, who rid of the gouernemẽt of his parents and maisters, abandons himselfe to to all libertie or rather bondage of his passion: which right like an vncleane spirit possessing him, casts him now into the water, now into the fire: sometimes caries him cleane ouer a rocke, and sometime flings him headlong to the bottome. Now if he take and follow reason for his guide, behold on the other part wonderfull difficulties: he must resolue to fight in euery part of the field: at euery step to be in conflict, and at handstrokes, as hauing his enemy in front, in flanke, & on the reareward, neuer leauing to assaile him. And what enemy? all that can delight him, all that he sees neare,

neare, or far off: briefly the greatest enemy of the world, the world it self. But which is worse, a thousand treacherous and dangerous intelligences among his owne forces, and his passion within himselfe desperate: which in that age growne to the highest, awaits but time, houre, and occasion to surprize him, and cast him into all viciousnesse. God onely & none other, can make him choose this way: God only can hold him in it to the end: God onely can make him victorious in all his combats. And wel we see how few they are that enter into it, and of those few, how many that retire againe. Follow the one way, or follow the other, he must either subiect himself to a tyrannical passion, or vndertake a weery and continuall combat,

willingly cast himself to destructiō, or fetter himself as it were in stocks, easily sincke with the course of the water, or painfully swimme against the streame. Loe here the young man, who in his youth hath drunke his full draught of the worlds vaine and deceiuable pleasures, ouertakē by them with such a dull heauines, and astonishment, as drunkards the morow after a feast: either so out of tast, that he will no more, or so glutted, that he can no more: not able without grief to speake, or thinke of them. Loe him that stoutly hath made resistance: he feeles himselfe so weery, and with this continuall conflict so brused and broken, that either he is vpon the point to yeeld himselfe, or content to dye, and so acquit himselfe. And this is all the

good,

good, all the contentment of this florishing age, by childrē so earnestly desired, and by old folks so hartily lamented. Now commeth that which is called perfect age, in the which mē haue no other thoughts, but to purchase themselues wisedome and rest. Perfect indeede, but herein onely perfect, that all imperfectiōs of humane nature, hiddē before vnder the simplicitie of childhood, or the lightnesse of youth, appeare at this age in their perfection. We speake of none in this place but such as are esteemed the wisest, and most happy in the conceit of the world. We played as you haue seene in feare: our short pleasures were attended on with long repentance. Behold, now present themselues to vs auarice, and ambition,

promising if we will adore them, perfect contentment of the goods and honors of th s world. And surely there are none, but the true children of the Lord, who by the faire illusions of the one or the other cast not themselues headlong from the top of the pinnacle. But in the end, what is all this contentment? The couetous mā makes a thousand voiages by sea and by land: runnes a thousand fortunes: escapes a thousand shipwrackes in perpetual feare and trauell: and many times he either looseth his time, or gaineth nothing but sicknesses, gouts, and oppilations for the time to come. In the purchase of this goodly repose, he bestoweth his true rest: and to gaine wealth looseth his life. Suppose he hath gained in good quantitie:

titie: that he hath spoyled the whole East of pearles, and drawen dry all the mines of the West: will he therfore be setled in quiet? can he say that he is content? All charges and iourneys past, by his passed paines he heapeth vp but future disquietnesse both of minde and body: from one trauell falling into another, neuer ending, but changing his miseries. He desired to haue them, and now feares to loose them: he got thē with burning ardour, and possesseth in trembling cold: he aduentured among theeues to seeke them, & hauing found them, theeues and robbers on all sides, runne mainely on him: he laboured to dig them out of the earth, and now is enforced to redig, and rehide them. Finally comming from all his voiages he comes

into a prison: and for an end of his bodily trauels, is takē with endlesse trauels of the minde. And what at length hath this poore soule attained after so many miseries? This deuill of couetise by his illusions, and enchantments, beares him in hand that he hath some rare and singular thing: and so it fareth with him, as with those sillie creatures, whom the Deuill seduceth vnder colour of releeuing their pouertie, who finde their hands full of leaues, supposing to finde them full of crownes. He possesseth or rather is possessed by a thing, wherein is neither force nor vertue: more vnprofitable, & more base, then the least hearbe of the earth. Yet hath he heaped together this vile excrement, and so brutish is growne, as therewith to crowne his

his head, which naturally he should tread vnder his feete. But howsoeuer it be, is he therewith content? Nay contrariwise lesse now, then euer. We commẽd most those drinks that breede an alteration, & sooneſt extinguish thirst: and those meates, which in least quantitie do longest resist hunger. Now herof the more a man drinks, the more he is a thirst, the more he eats, the more an hungred: It is a dropsie, (and as they terme it) the dogs hunger: sooner may he burst then be satisfied. And which is worse, so strange in some is this thirst, that it maketh them dig the pits, & painefully draw the water, and after wil not suffer them to drinke. In the middest of a riuer they are dry with thirst: and on a heape of corne cry out of famine:

they haue goods & dare not vse thē: they haue ioyes it seemes, & do not enioy thē: they neither haue for thē selues, nor for another: but of all they haue, they haue nothing: & yet haue want of all they haue not. Let vs thē returne to that, that the attaining of all these deceiuable goods is nothing else but weerines of body, & the possessiō for the most part, but weerinesse of the minde: which certeinly is so much the greater, as is more sensible, more subtile, & more tēder the soule then the body. But the heape of all miserie is whē they come to loose thē, whē either shipwrack, or sacking, or inuasiō, or fire, or such like calamities, to which these frayle things are subiect, doth take & cary thē frō thē. Thē fal they to cry, to weepe, & to tormēt them selues,

selues, as little childrē that haue lost their playgame, which notwithstā-ding is nothing worth. One cannot perswade thē, that mortall mē haue any other good in this world, but that which is mortall. They are in their owne conceits not onely spoi-led, but altogether slayed. And for asmuch as in these vaine things they haue fixed al their hope, hauing lost them, they fall into despaire, out of the which commonly they cannot be withdrawen. And which is more, all that they haue not gained accor-ding to the accounts they made, they esteeme lost: all that which turnes them not to great and extra-ordinary profit, they account as da-mage: whereby we see some fall in-to such despaire, as they cast away themselues. In short, the recom-

pence that Couetise yeeldes those that haue serued it all their life, is oftentimes like that of the Deuill: whereof the end is, that after a small time hauing gratified his disciples, either he giues them ouer to a hangman, or himselfe breaks their necks. I will not here discourse of the wickednesse and mischiefes whereunto the couetous mẽ subiect themselues to attaine to these goods, whereby their conscience is filled with a perpetuall remorse, which neuer leaues them in quiet: sufficeth that in this ouer vehement exercise, which busieth and abuseth the greatest part of the world, the body is slaine, the minde is weakened, the soule is lost without any pleasure or contentment.

Come we to ambition, which by

by a greedinesse of honour fondly holdeth occupied the greatest persons. Thinke we there to finde more? nay rather lesse. As the one deceiueth vs, giuing vs for all our trauell, but a vile excrement of the earth: so the other repayes vs; but with smoke and winde: the rewardes of this being as vaine, as those of that were grosse. Both in the one and the other, we fall into a bottomlesse pit; but into this the fall by so much the more dangerous, as at the first shew, the water is more pleasant and cleare. Of those that giue themselues to court ambition, some are great about Princes, others commanders of Armies: both sortes according to their degree, you see saluted, reuerenced, and adored of those that are

vnder them. You see them apparelled in purple, in scarlet, and in cloth of gold: it seemes at first sight there is no contentment in the world but theirs. But mē know not how heauy an ounce of that vaine honour weighes, what those reuerēces cost them, and how dearely they pay for an ell of those rich stuffes: who knew them well, would neuer buy them at the price. The one hath attained to this degree, after a long & painefull seruice hazarding his life vpon euery occasion, with losse oftimes of a leg or an arme, and that at the pleasure of a Prince, that more regards a hundred perches of grōūd on his neighbours frōtiers, then the liues of a hundred thousand such as he: vnfortunate to serue who loues him not: and foolish to thinke himselfe

ſelfe in honor with him, that makes ſo little reckening to looſe him for a thing of no worth. Others grow vp by flattering a Prince, and long ſubmitting their roungs and hands to ſay and do without difference whatſoeuer they will haue them: whereunto a good mind can neuer commaund it ſelfe. They ſhall haue indured a thouſād iniuries, receiued a thouſand diſgraces, and as neare as they ſeeme about the Prince, they are neuertheleſſe alwayes as the Lions keeper, who by long patiēce, a thouſand feedings, and a thouſand clawings hath made a fierce Lion familiar, yet giues him neuer meate, but with pulling backe his hand, alwayes in feare leaſt he ſhould catch him: and if once in a yeare he bites him, he ſets it ſo cloſe, that he is paid

for a long time after. Such is the end of all Princes fauorites. When a Prince after long breathings hath raised a man to great height, he makes it his pastime, at what time he seemes to be at the top of his trauell, to cast him down at an instant: when he hath filled him with all wealth, he wrings him after as a sponge: louing none but himselfe, and thinking euery one made, but to serue, & please him. These blind courtiers make themselues beleeue, that they haue friends, and many that honour them: neuer considering that as they make semblance to loue, and honor euery body, so others do by them. Their superiors disdaine them, and neuer but with scorne do so much as salute them. Their inferiors salute them because they

they haue neede of them (I meane of their fortune, of their foode, of their apparell, not of their person) & for their equals betweene whom commonly friendship consists, they enuy each other, accuse each other, crosse each other; continually grieued either at their owne harme, or at others good. Now what greater hell is there, what greater torment, then enuie? which in truth is nought else but a feauer *Hectique* of the minde: so they are vtterly frustrate of all friendship, euer iudged by the wisest the chiefe and soueraigne good among men. Will you see it more clearely? Let but fortune turne her backe, euery man turnes from them: let her frowne, euery man lookes aside on them: let them once be disroabed of their trium-

phall garment, no body will any more know them. Againe, let there be apparelled in it the most vnworthy, and infamous whatsoeuer: euen he without difficultie by vertue of his robe, shall inherit all the honors the other had done him. In the meane time they are puffed vp, and grow proude, as the Asse which caried the image of *Isis* was for the honors done to the Goddesse, and regard not that it is the fortune they carry which is honored, not themselues, on whom as on Asses, many times she will be caried. But you will say: At least so long as that fortune endured, they were at ease, & had their cõtentment, & who hath three or 4. or more yeares of happy time, hath not bin all his life vnhappie. True, if this be to be at ease, continually

tinually to feare to be cast downe from that degree, whereunto they are raised: and dayly to desire with great trauell to clime yet higher. Those (my friend) whom thou takest so well at their ease, because thou seest them but without, are within far otherwise. They are faire built prisons, full within of deepe ditches, and dungeons: full of darkenesse, serpents and torments. Thou supposest them lodged at large, and they thinke their lodgings straite. Thou thinkest them very high, and they thinke themselues verie low. Now as sicke is he, and many times more sicke, who thinkes himself so, then who in deed is. Suppose them to be Kings: if they thinke thē selues slaues, they are no better: for what are we but by opinion? You see thē

well followed and attended: and euen those whom they haue chosen for their guard, they distrust. Alone or in cõpany euer they are in feare. Alone they looke behinde them: in companie they haue an eye on euery side of thē. They drinke in gold & siluer; but in those, not in earth or glasse is poison prepared & dronk. They haue their beds soft and well made: when they lay them to sleep you shall not heare a mouse stir in the chamber: not so much as a flie shal come neare their faces. Yet nuertheless, where the countreymā sleepes at the fall of a great riuer, at the noise of a market, hauing no other bed but the earth, nor couering but the heauēs, these in the middest of all this silence and delicacie, do nothing but turne from side to side,

it

it seemes still that they heare some body, there rest it selfe is without rest. Lastly, wil you know what the diuersitie is betweene the most hardly intreated prisoners & them? both are enchained, both loaden with fetters, but that the one hath them of iron, the other of gold, and that the one is tied but by the body, the other by the mind. The prisoner drawes his fetters after him, the courtier weareth his vpon him. The prisoners mind somtimes comforts the paine of his bodie, and sings in the midst of his miseries: the courtier tormented in minde weerieth incessantly his bodie, and can neuer giue it rest. And as for the contentment you imagine they haue, you are therein yet more deceiued, You iudge and esteeme them great, be-

cause they are raised high : but as fondly, as who should iudge a dwarf great, for being set on a tower, or on the top of a mountaine . You measure (so good a Geometrician you are) the image with his base, which were conuenient (to know his true height) to be measured by it selfe : whereas you regard not the height of the image, but the height of the place it stands vpon . You deeme them great (if in this earth there can be greatnesse , which in respect of the whole heauens is but a point.) But could you enter into their mindes, you would iudge, that neither they are great , true greatnesse consisting in contẽpt of those vaine greatnesses , whereunto they are slaues : nor seeme vnto them selues so, seeing dayly they are aspiring

ring higher, and neuer where they would be. Some one sets downe a boũd in his mind. Could I attaine to such a degree, lo, I were content: I would then rest my selfe. Hath he attained it? he giues himselfe not so much as a breathing: he would yet ascend higher. That which is beneath he coũts a toy: it is in his opiniõ but one step. He reputes himself low, because there is some one higher, in stead of reputing himself high, because there are a milliõ lower: & so high he climes at last, that either his breath failes him by the way, or he slides frõ the top to the bottome. Or if he get vp by all his trauell, it is but as to find himself on the top of the Alpes, not aboue the cloudes, windes and stormes: but rather at the deuotion of lightnings, & tempests, and whatsoeuer else horrible,

and dangerous is engendred, and conceiued in the aire: which most commonly taketh pleasure to thunderbolt and dash into powder that proude height of theirs. It may be herein you will agree with me, by reason of the examples wherewith both histories, and mens memories are full. But say you, such at least whom nature hath sent into the world with crowns on their heads, and scepters in their hands: such as from their birth she hath set in that height, as they neede take no paine to asc̄d: seeme without controuersie exempt from all these iniuries, and by consequence may call them selues happie. It may be indeede they feele lesse such inc̄modities, hauing bin borne, bred & brought vp among them: as one borne neare the

the downefals of *Nilus* becomes deafe to the found: in prison, lamēts not the want of libertie: among the *Cimerians* in perpetuall night, wisheth not for day: on the top of the Alpes, thinkes not straunge of the mistes, the tempests, the snowes, & the stormes. Yet free doubtlesse they are not when the lightening often blasteth a flowre of their crownes, or breakes their scepter in their hands: when a drift of snow ouerwhelmes them: when a mist of heauinesse, and griefe continually blindeth their wit and vnderstanding. Crowned they are indeed, but with a crowne of thornes. They beare a scepter: but it is of a reede, more thē any thing in the world pliable, & obediēt to al winds: it being so far off that such a crown can cure the mai-

grims of the minde, & such a scepter keepe off and fray away the griefes and cares which houer about them: that it is contrariwise the crowne that brings them, and the scepter which from all parts attracts them. O crowne, said the Persian Monarch, who knew how heauie thou sitteſt on the head, would not vouchsafe to take thee vp, though he found thee in his way. This Prince it seemed gaue fortune to the whole world, distributed vnto men haps and mishaps at his pleasure: could in show make euery man content: himself in the meane while freely confessing, that in the whole world, which he held in his hand there was nothing but griefe, and vnhappinesse. And what will all the rest tell vs, if they list to vtter what they

they found? We will not aske them who haue concluded a miserable life with a dishonorable death: who haue beheld their kingdoms buried before them, and haue in great miserie long euerliued their greatnes. Not of *Dionyse* of *Sicil*, more contēt with a handfull of twigs to whip little childrē of *Corinth* in a schoole, then with the scepter, wherewith he had beaten all *Sicil*: nor of *Sylla*, who hauing robbed the whole state of *Rome*, which had before robbed the whole world, neuer found meanes of rest in himselfe, but by robbing himselfe of his owne estate, with incredible hazard both of his power & authority. But demād we the opinion of king *Salomon*, a man indued with singular gifts of God, rich and wealthie of all things: who

sought for treasure from the Iles. He wil teach vs by a booke of purpose, that hauing tried all the felicities of the earth, he found nothing but vanitie, trauell, and vexation of spirit. Aske we the Emperour *Augustus*, who peaceably possessed the whole world. He will bewaile his life past, and among infinite toiles wish for the rest of the meanest mā of the earth: accounting that day most happy, whē he might vnloade himself of this insupportable greatnesse to liue quietly amōg the least. Of *Tiberius* his successour, he will confesse vnto vs, that he holds the Empire as a wolfe by the eares, and that (if without danger of biting he might) he would gladly let it go: cōplaining on fortune for lifting him so high, and then taking away the ladder,

ladder, that he could not come down again. Of *Diocletian*, a Prince of so great wisedome and vertue in the opinion of the world: he will preferre his voluntarie banishment at *Salona*, before all the Romaine Empire. Finally, the Emperor *Charles* the fifth, esteemed by our age the most happie that hath liued these many ages: he will curse his conquestes, his victories, his triumphes: and not be ashamed to confesse that far more good in cõparison he hath felt in one day of his Monkish solitarinesse, then in all his triumphant life. Now shal we thinke those happy in this imaginate greatnesse who themselues thinke themselues, vnhappie? seeking their happinesse in lessening themselues, & not finding in the world one place to rest this

greatnesse, or one bed quietly to sleepe in? Happy is he onely who in minde liues contented: and he most of all vnhappie, whom nothing he can haue can content. Then miserable *Pyrrhus* king of *Albanie*, who would winne all the world, to win (as he sayd) rest: and went so far to seeke that which was so neare him. But more miserable *Alexãder*, that being borne king of a great realme, & Conqueror almost of the earth, sought for more worldes to satisfie his toolish ambition, within three dayes content, with sixe foote of ground. To cõclude, are they borne on the highest Alpes? they seeke to scale heauen. Haue they subdued all the kings of the earth? they haue quarels to pleade with God, and indeuour to treade vnder foote his king-

kingdome. They haue no end nor limite, till God laughing at their vaine purposes, when they thinke themselues at the last step, thunderstriketh all this presumption, breaking in sinners their scepters in their hands, and oftentimes intrapping them in their owne crownes. At a word, whatsoeuer happinesse can be in that ambitiō promiseth, is but suffering much ill, to get ill. Mē thinke by daily climing higher to plucke themselues out of this ill, and the height whereunto they so painfully aspire, is the height of miserie it selfe. I speake not here of the wretchednesse of them, who all their life haue held out their cap to receiue the almes of court fortune, and can get nothing, often with incredible heart griefe, seeing some

by lesse paines taken haue riches fall into their hands: of them, who iustling one another to haue it, loose it & cast it into the hands of a third: Of those, who holding it in their hands to hold it faster, haue lost it through their fingers. Such by all men are esteemed vnhappy, and are indeed so, because they iudge them selues so. It sufficeth that all these liberalities which the Deuill casteth vs as out at a window, are but baits: all these pleasures but embushes: & that he doth but make his sport of vs, who striue one with another for such things, as most vnhappy is he, that hath best hap to find thē. Well now, you will say, the Couetous in all his goodes, hath no good: the Ambitious at the best he can be, is but ill. But may there not be some,

who

who supplying the place of Iustice, or being neare about a Prince, may without following such vnbridled passions, pleasantly enioy their goodes, ioyning honour with rest and contentment of minde? Surely in former ages (there yet remaining among men some sparkes of sincerity) in some sort it might be so: but being of that composition they now are, I see not how it may be in any sort. For deale you in affaires of estate in these times, either you shal do well, or you shall do ill. If ill, you haue God for your enemy, & your owne conscience for a perpetually tormenting executioner. If wel, you haue men for your enemies, and of men the greatest: whose enuie and malice will spie you out, and whose crueltie and tyranny will euermore

threaten you. Pleaſe the people you pleaſe a beaſt: and pleaſing ſuch, ought to be diſpleaſing to your ſelf. Pleaſe your ſelf, you diſpleaſe God: pleaſe him, you incurre a thouſand dãgers in the world, with purchaſe of a thouſand diſpleaſures. Whereof it growes, that if you could heare the talke of the wiſeſt and leaſt diſcontent of this kinde of men, whether they ſpeake aduiſedly, or their words paſſe them by force of truth, one would gladly change garment with his tenant: another preacheth how goodly an eſtate it is to haue nothing: a third cõplaining that his braines are broken with the noiſe of Court or Pallace, hath no other thought, but as ſoone as he may to retire himſelfe thence. So that you ſhall not ſee any but is diſpleaſed with

with his owne calling, and enuieth that of another: ready neuertheleſſe to repent him, if a man ſhould take him at his word. None but is weerie of the buſineſſes whereunto his age is ſubiect, and wiſheth not to be elder, to free himſelfe of them: albeit otherwiſe he keepeth off old age as much as in him lyeth.

What muſt we thē do in ſo great a cōtrarietie & confuſion of minds? Muſt we to find true humanitie, flie the ſocietie of men, & hide vs in forreſts among wild beaſts? to auoyde theſe vnruly paſſions, eſchue the aſſembly of creatures ſuppoſed reaſonable? to pluck vs out of the cuils of the world, ſequeſter our ſelues frō the world? Could we in ſo doing liue at reſt, it were ſomething.

But alas! men cannot take here-

in what part they would: and euen they which do, find not there all the rest they sought for. Some would gladly do, but shame of the world recals them. Fooles to be ashamed of what in their hearts they condemne: and more fooles to be aduised by the greatest enemie they can or ought to haue. Others are borne in hand that they ought to serue the publicke, not marking that who counsell them serue onely thē selues: & that the more part would not much seeke the publicke, but that they found their owne particular. Some are told, that by their good example they may amend others: and consider not that a hundred sound men, euen Phisitions themselues, may sooner catch the plague in an infected towne, then one

one be healed: that it is but to tempt God, to enter therein: that against so contagious an ayre there is no preseruatiue, but in getting far from it. Finally, that as little as the fresh waters falling into the sea, can take from it his saltnesse: so little can one *Lot* or two, or three reforme a court of *Sodome*. And as cõcerning the wisest, who no lesse carefull for their soules, then bodies, seeke to bring them into a sound & wholesome ayre, farre from the infection of wickednesse: and who led by the hand of some Angell of God, retire themselues in seaton, as *Lot* into some little village of *Segor*, out of the corruption of the world, into some countrey place from the infected townes, there quietly employing the time in some knowledge &

serious contemplation: I willingly yeeld they are in a place of lesse danger, yet because they carie the danger, in thēselues, not absolutely exempt from danger. They flie the court, and a court followes them on all sides: they endeuour to escape the world: and the world pursues thē to death. Hardly in this world can they finde a place where the world findes them not: so greedily it seekes to murther them. And if by some speciall grace of God they seeme for a while free from these dangers, they haue some pouertie that troubles them, some domesticall debate that torments them, or some familiar spirit that tempts thē: briefly the world dayly in some sort or other makes it selfe felt of them. But the worst is, when we are

out

out of these externall warres and troubles, we finde greater ciuill war within our selues: the flesh against the spirit, passion against reason, earth against heauē, the world within vs fighting for the world, euermore so lodged in the bottome of our owne hearts, that on no side we can flie from it. I will say more: he makes profession to flie the world, who seekes thereby the prayse of the world: he faineth to run away, who according to the prouerbe, by drawing back sets himself forward: he refuseth honours, that would thereby be prayed to take them: & hides him from mē to the end they should come to seeke him. So the world often harbours in disguised attire amōg thē that flie the world. This is an abuse, But follow we the

company of men, the world hath his court among thē: seeke we the Deserts, it hath there his dens & places of resort, and in the Desert it selfe tēpteth Christ Iesus. Retire we our selues into our selues, we finde it there as vncleane as any where. We cānot make the world dye in vs, but by dying our selues. We are in the world, & the world in vs, & to separate vs frō the world, we must separate vs from our selues. Now this separation is called Death. We are, we thinke, come out of the contagious Citie, but we are not aduised that we haue sucked the bad ayre, that we carrie the plague with vs, that we so participate with it, that through rockes, through desarts, through moūtaines, it euer accōpanieth vs. Hauing auoyded the cōtagion

gion of others, yet we haue it in our selues. We haue withdrawen vs out of mē: but not withdrawen mā out of vs. The tēpestuous sea torments vs: we are grieued at the heart, and desirous to vomit: & to be discharged thereof, we remoue out of one ship into another, frō a greater to a lesse: we promise our selues rest in vaine: they being alwayes the same winds that blow, the same waues that swell, the same humors that are stirred. To all no other port, no other meane of trāquilitie but onely death. We were sicke in a chamber neare the street, or neare the market: we caused our selues to be carried into some backer closet, where the noise was not so great. But though there the noise was lesse: yet was the feauer there neuertheles: & thereby

loſt nothing of his heate. Change bed, chamber, houſe, countrey, againe and againe: we ſhall euery where find the ſame vnreſt, becauſe euery where we finde our ſelues: & ſeeke not ſo much to be others, as to be other wheres. We follow ſolitarineſſe, to flie carefulneſſe. We retire vs (ſo ſay we) from the wicked: but cary with vs our auarice, our ambition, our riotouſneſſe, all our corrupt affections: which breed in vs 1000. remorſes, and 1000. times each day bring to our remẽbrance the garlike and onions of *Egypt*. Daily they paſſe the Ferry with vs: ſo that both on this ſide, and beyond the water, we are in continuall combat. Now could we caſſere this cõpany, which eates & gnawes our mind, doubtleſſe we ſhould be

at

at rest, not in solitarinesse onely, but euen in the thicket of men. For the life of man vpon earth is but a continuall warfare. Are we deliuered from externall practises? we are to take heed of internall espials. Are the Greekes gone away? we haue a *Sinon* within, that will betray them the place. We must euer be waking, hauing an eye to the watch, & weapons in our hands, if we will not euery houre be surprised, and giuen vp to the will of our enemies. And how at last can we escape? Not by the woods, by the riuers, nor by the mountaines: not by throwing our selues into a presse, nor by thrusting our selues into a hole, One onely meane there is, which is death: which in end separating our spirit from our flesh, the pure and cleane

part of our soule from the vncleane, which within vs euermore bandeth it selfe for the world, appeaseth by this separation that, which conioyned in one & the same person could not, without vtter choaking of the spirit, but be in perpetuall contention.

And as touching the contentmẽt that may be in the exercises of the wisest mẽ in their solitarines, as reading diuine or prophane bookes, with all other knowledges & learnings: I hold well that it is indeed a far other thing, then are those mad hũtings, which make sauage a multitude of mẽ possessed with these or the like diseases of the minde. Yet must they all abide the iudgement pronoũced by the wisest amõg the wise, *Salomon*, that all this neuertheless

lesse applied to mās natural disposi-tiō, is to him but vanitie & vexation of minde. Some are euer learning to correct their speech, & neuer thinke of correcting their life. Others dis-pute in their Logique of reason, and the Arte of reason: and loose there-by many times their natural reason. One learnes by Arithmeticke to diuide to the smallest fractions, and hath not skill to part one shilling with his brother. Another by Geo-metry can measure fields, & towns, and countreys: but can not measure himselfe. The Musitian can accord his voyces, and soundes, and times together: hauing nothing in his heart but discordes, nor one passion in his soule in good tune. The A-strologer lookes vp on high, & falles in the next ditch: fore-knowes the

future, and forgoes the present: hath often his eye on the heauens: his heart lõg before buried in the earth. The Philosopher discourseth of the nature of al other things: & knowes not himselfe. The Historian can tell of the warres of *Thebes* & of *Troy*: but what is done in his owne house can tell nothing. The Lawyer will make lawes for all the world, and not one for himselfe. The Phisition will cure others, and be blind in his owne disease: finde the least alteration in his pulse, and not marke the burning feauers of his minde. Lastly, the Diuine wil spend the greatest part of his time in disputing of faith, & cares not to heare of charitie: wil talke of God, and not regard to succour men. These knowledges bring on the minde an endlesse labour,

bour, but no contentment: for the more one knowes, the more he would know.

They pacifie not the debates a man feeles in himself, they cure not the diseases of his mind. They make him learned, but they make not him good: cunning, but not wise. I say more. The more a man knowes, the more knowes he that he knowes not: the fuller the mind is, the emptier it findes it selfe: forasmuch as whatsoeuer a man can know of any science in this world is but the least part of what he is ignorant: all his knowledge consisting in knowing his ignorance, all his perfection in noting his imperfectiõs, which who best knowes and notes, is in truth among men the most wise and perfect. In short we must conclude

with *Salomon*, that the beginning and end of wisedome is the feare of God: that this wisedome neuertheless is taken of the world for meere follie, and persecuted by the world as a deadly enemy: and that as who feareth God, ought to feare no euil, for that all his euils are conuerted to his good: so neither ought he to hope for good in the world, hauing there the deuil his professed enemy, whō the Scripture termeth Prince of the world.

But with what exercise soeuer we passe the time, behold old age vnwares to vs comes vpon vs: which whether we thrust our selues into the preasse of men, or hide vs some where out of the way, neuer failes to finde vs out. Euery man makes account in that age to rest himselfe of

of all his trauailes without further care, but to keepe himselfe at ease and in health And see contrariwise in this age, there is nothing but an after taft of all the foregoing euils: & most commonly a plentifull harueſt of all such vices as in the whole course of their life, hath held and possessed them. There you haue the vnhabilitie and weakenesse of infancie, and (which is worse) many times accompanied with authoritie: there you are payed for the excesse & riotousnesse of youth, with gowts, palsies, & such like diseases, which take from you limme after limme with extreame paine & torment. There you are recompenced for the trauailes of minde, the watchings and cares of manhood, with losse of sight, losse of hearing, and

all the fences one after another, except onely the fence of paine. Not one part in vs but death takes in gage to be assured of vs, as of bad pay-maisters, which infinitely feare their dayes of payment. Nothing in vs which will not by & by be dead: and neuertheleſſe our vices yet liue in vs, and not onely liue, but in deſpite of nature daily grow young againe. The couetous man hath one foote in his graue, and is yet burying his money: meaning belike to find it againe another day. The ambitious in his will ordaineth vnprofitable pompes for his funerals, making his vice to liue and triumph after his death. The riotous no longer able to daunce on his feete, daunceth with his ſhoulders, all vices hauing left him, and he not yet able to

leaue

leaue them . The child wisheth for youth: and this man laments it. The young man liueth in hope of the future, and this feeles the euil present, laments the false pleasures past, and sees for the time to come nothing to hope for . More foolish then the child , in bewailing the time he can not recall, and not remembring the euill he had therein: and more wretched thē the yong mā , in that after a wretched life not able but wretchedly to dye , he sees on all sides but matter of despaire . As for him, who from his youth hath vndertaken to combate against the flesh, & against the world : who hath taken so great paines to mortifie himselfe & leaue the world before his time: who besides those ordinarie euils findes himself vexed with this great

and incurable disease of old age, & feeles notwithstãding his flesh how weake soeuer, stronger oftentimes then his spirite: what good I pray can he haue but onely herein: that he sees his death at hand, that he sees his combate finished, that he sees himselfe ready to depart by death out of this loathsome prison, wherein all his life time he hath bin racked and tormented? I will not here speake of the infinite euils wherewith men in all ages are annoyed, as losse of friends and parẽts, banishments, exiles, disgraces, and such others, common & ordinary in the world: one complayning of loosing his children, another of hauing thẽ: one making sorow for his wifes death, another for her life, one finding fault, that he is too high in court,

court, another, that he is not high enough. The world is so full of euils, that to write them all, would require another world as great as it selfe. Sufficeth, that if the most happy in mens opinions do counterpoize his haps with his mishaps, he shall iudge himselfe vnhappy: and he iudge him happy, who had he bene set three dayes in his place, would giue it ouer to him that came next: yea, sooner then he, who shall consider in all the goods that euer he hath had the euils he hath endured to get them, and hauing them to retaine and keepe them (I speake of the pleasures that may be kept, and not of those that wither in a moment) wil iudge of himselfe, and by himselfe, that the keeping it selfe of the greatest felicitie in this world,

is full of vnhappinesse and infelicity. Conclude then, that Childhood is but a foolish simplicitie, Youth, a vaine heate, Manhood, a painefull carefulnesse, and Old-age, a noysome languishing: that our playes are but teares, our pleasures, feauers of the minde, our goods, rackes and torments, our honours, heauie vanities, our rest, vnrest: that passing from age to age, is but passing from euill to euill and from the lesse vnto the greater: and that alwayes it is but one waue driuing on another, vntill we be arriued at the hauen of death. Conclude I say, that life is but a wishing for the future, & a bewailing of the past: a loathing of what we haue tasted, and a longing for that we haue not tasted, a vaine memorie of the state past, &

a doubtfull expectation of the state to come: finally, that in all our life there is nothing certaine, nothing assured, but the certaintie and vncertaintie of death. Behold, now comes Death vnto vs: Behold her, whose approch we so much feare. We are now to consider whether she be such as we are made beleeue: and whether we ought so greatly to flie her, as commonly we do. We are afrayde of her: but like little children of a vizard, or of the Images of *Hecate*. We haue her in horrour: but because we conceiue her not such as she is, but ougly, terrible, and hideous: such as it pleaseth the Painters to represent vnto vs on a wall. We flie before her: but it is because foretaken with such

vaine imaginations, we giue not our selues leisure to marke her. But stay we, stand we stedfast, looke we her in the face: we shall finde her quite other then she is painted vs: and altogether of other countenaunce then our miserable life. Death makes an end of this life. This life is a perpetuall miserie and tempest: Death then is the issue of our miseries and entraunce of the port where we shall ride in safetie from all windes. And should we feare that which withdraweth vs from miserie, or which drawes vs into our Hauen? Yea but you will say, it is a paine to dye. Admit it be: so is there in curing of a wound. Such is the world, that one euill can not be cured but by another, to heale a contusion, must be made an incision.

sion. You will say, there is difficultie in the passage: So is there no Hauen, no Port, whereinto the entraunce is not straite and combersome. No good thing is to be bought in this world with other then the coyne of labour and paine. The entrance indeede is hard, if our selues make it hard, comming thither with a tormented spirit, a troubled mind, a wauering & irresolute thought. But bring we quietnesse of minde, constancie, and full resolution, we shall not finde any daunger or difficultie at all. Yet what is the paine that death brings vs? Nay, what can she do with those paines we feele? We accuse her of all the euils we abide in ending our life, and consider not how many more grieuous woundes or sickenesses we

haue endured without death : or how many more vehement paines we haue suffered in this life , in the which we called euen her to our succour . All the paines our life yeeldes vs at the last houre we impute to Death : not marking that life begun and continued in all sorts of paine, must also necessarily end in paine . Not marking (I say) that it is the remainder of our life, not death, that tormenteth vs : the end of our nauigation that paines vs , not the Hauen we are to enter : which is nothing else but a safegard against all windes. We complaine of death where we should complaine of life: as if one hauing bene long sicke, and beginning to be well , should accuse his health of his last paines, and not the reliques of his disease.

Tell

Tell me, what is it else to be dead, but to be no more liuing in the world? Absolutely & simply not to be in the world, is it any paine? Did we then feele any paine, when as yet we were not? Haue we euer more resemblance of Death, then when we sleep? Or euer more rest then at that time? Now if this be no paine, why accuse we Death of the paines our life giues vs at our departure? Vnlesse also we will fondly accuse the time when as yet we were not, of the paines we felt at our birth? If the comming in be with teares, is it wōder that such be the going out? If the beginning of our being, be the beginning of our paine, is it maruell that such be the ending? But if our not being in times past hath bene without paine,

and all this being contrariwise full of paine: whom should we by reason accuse of the last paines, the not being to come, or the remnant of this present being? We thinke we dye not, but when we yeeld vp our last gaspe. But if we marke well, we dye euery day, euery houre, euery moment. We apprehend death as a thing vnusuall to vs: and yet haue nothing so common in vs. Our liuing is but continuall dying: looke how much we liue, we dye: how much we increase, our life decreases. We enter not a step into life, but we enter a step into death. Who hath liued a third part of his yeares, hath a third part of himselfe dead. Who halfe his yeares, is already halfe dead. Of our life, all the time past is dead, the present liues

and

and dyes at once, and the future likewise shall dye. The past is no more, the future is not yet, the present is, and no more is. Briefly, this whole life is but a death: it is as a candle lighted in our bodies: in one the winde makes it melt away, in another blowes it cleane out, many times ere it be halfe burned: in others it endureth to the end. Howsoeuer it be, looke how much it shineth, so much it burneth: her shining is her burning: her light a vanishing smoke: her last fire, her last wike, and her last drop of moisture. So is it in the life of man, life and death in man is all one. If we call the last breath death, so must we all the rest: all proceeding from one place, and all in one manner. One onely dif-

ferēce there is betweene this life & that we call death: that during the one, we haue alwaies wherof to die: and after the other, there remaineth only wherefto liue. In sum, euen he that thinketh death simply to be the end of man, ought not to feare it: in as much as who desireth to liue long, desireth to dye longer: and who feareth soone to dye, feareth (to speake properly) lest he may not longer dye.

But vnto vs brought vp in a more holy schoole, death is a farre other thing: neither need we as the Pagans of cōsolatiōs against death: but that death serue vs as a cōsolatiō against all sorts of affliction: so that we must not only strēgthē our selues, as they, not to feare it, but accustome our selues to hope for it. For vnto vs it is not

not a departing from paine & euill, but an acceſſe vnto all good: not the end of life, but the end of death, and the beginning of life. Better, ſaith *Salomon*, is the day of death, thē the day of birth, and why? becauſe it is not to vs a laſt day, but the dawning of an euerlaſting day. No more ſhal we haue in that glorious light, either ſorow for the paſt, or expectation of the future: for all ſhall be there preſent vnto vs, & that preſēt ſhall neuer more paſſe. No more ſhall we powre out our ſelues in vaine and painfull pleaſures: for we ſhalbe filled with true & ſubſtantiall pleaſures. No more ſhall we paine our ſelues in heaping togeather thete exhalations of the earth, for the heauens ſhall be ours, and this maſſe of earth, which euer drawes vs to-

wardes the earth, shalbe buried in the earth. No more shall we ouerwearie our selues with mounting from degree to degree, and from honour to honor: for we shall highly be raised aboue all heights of the world; and from on high laugh at the follie of all those we once admired, who fight together for a point, and as litle children for lesse then an apple. No more to be brief shal we haue combats in our selues: for our flesh shall be dead, and our spirit in full life: our passion buried, and our reason in perfect libertie. Our soule deliuered out of this foule and filthy prison, where, by long continuing it is growen into an habite of crookednesse, shall againe draw her owne breath, recognize her auncient dwelling, and

againe remember her former glory and dignitie. This flesh my friend which thou feelest, this body which thou touchest is not man: Man is from heauen: heauen is his countrey & his ayre. That he is in his body, is but by way of exile and confinement. Man indeede is soule and spirite: Man is rather of celestiall and diuine qualitie, wherein is nothing grosse nor materiall. This body such as now it is, is but the barke and shell of the soule: which must necessarily be broken, if we will be hatched: if we will indeede liue and see the light. We haue it semes, some life, and some sence in vs: but are so crooked and contracted, that we cannot so much as stretch out our wings, much lesse take our flight towards heauen, vntill we be

disburthened of this earthly burthen, We looke, but through falſe ſpectacles: we haue eyes but ouergrowen with pearles: we thinke we ſee, but it is in a dreame, wherein we ſee nothing but deceit. All that we haue, and all that we know is but abuſe and vanitie. Death onely can reſtore vs both life and light: and we thinke (ſo blockiſh we are) that ſhe comes to rob vs of them. We ſay we are Chriſtians: that we beleeue after this mortall, a life immortall: that death is but a ſeparation of the body & ſoule: & that the ſoule returnes to his happie abode, there to ioy in God, who onely is all good: that at the laſt day it ſhall againe take the body, which ſhall no more be ſubiect to corruption. With theſe goodly diſcourſes we fill

fill all our bookes: and in the meane while, when it comes to the point, the very name of death as the horrib'eſt thing in the world makes vs quake and tremb'e. If we beleeue as we ſpeake, what is that we feare? to be happy? to be at our eaſe? to be more content in a moment, then we might be in the longeſt mortall life that might be? or muſt not we of force confeſſe, that we beleeue it but in part? that all we haue is but words? that all our diſcourſes, as of theſe hardie trencher Knights, are but vaunting and vanitie? Some you ſhall ſee, that will ſay: I know well that I paſſe out of this life into a better: I make no doubt of it: only I feare the midway ſtep, that I am to ſtep ouer. Weak hatted creatures! they will kill themſelues to

get their miserable liuing: suffer infinitie paines, and infinite wounds at another mans pleasure: paie infinite deathes without dying, for things of nought, for things that perish, and perchance make them perish with them. But when they haue but one pace to passe to be at rest, not for a day, but for euer: not an indifferēt rest, but such as mans minde cannot comprehend: they tremble, their hearts faile them, they are affrayde: and yet the ground of their harme is nothing but feare. Let them neuer tell me, they apprehend the paine: it is but an abuse: a purpose to conceale the little faith they haue. No, no, they would rather languish of the gowt, the sciatica, any disease whatsoeuer: then dye one sweete death with the least paine

paine possible: rather pyningly dye limme after limme, outliuing as it were, all their sences, motions, and actions, then speedily dye, immediatly to liue for euer. Let them tell me no more that they would in this world learne to liue: for euery one is thereunto sufficiently instructed in himself, & not one but is cunning in the trade. Nay rather they should learne in this world to dye, & once to dye well, dye daily in themselues: so prepared, as if the end of euery dayes worke, were the end of our life. Now contrariwise there is nothing to their eares more offensiue, then to heare of death. Senseless people! we abandon our life to the ordinarie hazards of warre, for seauen frankes pay: are formost in an assault, for a little bootie: go into

places, whence there is no hope of returning, with danger many times both of bodies and soules. But to free vs from all hazards, to winne things inestimable, to enter an eternall life, we faint in the passage of one pace, wherein is no difficultie, but in opinion: yea we so faint, that were it not of force we must passe, and that God in despite of vs will do vs a good turne, hardly should we finde in all the world one, how vnhappy or wretched soeuer, that would euer passe. Another will say, had I liued till fiftie or sixtie yeares, I should haue bene contented: I should not haue cared to liue longer: but to dye so young is no reason. I should haue knowen the world before I had left it. Simple soule! in this world there is neither

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young nor old. The longeſt age in compariſon of all that is paſt, or all that is to come, is nothing: and when thou haſt liued to the age thou now deſireſt, all the paſt will be nothing: thou wilt ſtill gape for that is to come. The paſt will yeeld thee but ſorrow, the future but expectation, the preſent no contentment. As ready thou wilt then be to redemaund longer reſpite, as before. Thou flieſt thy creditour from moneth to moneth, and time to time, as ready to pay the laſt day, as the firſt: thou ſeekeſt but to be acquitted. Thou haſt taſted all which the world eſteemeth pleaſures: not one of them is new vnto thee. By drinking oftener, thou ſhalt be neuer a whit the more ſatisfied: for the body thou carieſt, like

the bored paile of *Danaus* daughters, will neuer be full. Thou mayſt ſooner weare it out, then wearie thy ſelfe with vſing, or rather abuſing it. Thou craueſt long life to caſt it away, to ſpend it on worthleſſe delights, to miſpend it on vanities. Thou art couetous in deſiring, and prodigall in ſpending. Say not thou findeſt fault with the Court, or the Pallace: but that thou deſireſt longer to ſerue the common wealth, to ſerue thy countrey, to ſerue God. He that ſet thee on worke knowes vntill what day, and what houre, thou ſhouldeſt be at it: he well knowes how to direct his worke. Should he leaue thee there longer, perchance thou wouldeſt marre all. But if he will pay thee liberally for thy labour, as much

much for halfe a dayes worke, as for a whole: as much for hauing wrought till noone, as for hauing borne all the heate of the day: art thou not ſo much the more to thanke & praiſe him? but if thou examine thine owne conſcience, thou lamēteſt not the cauſe of the widow, and the orphane, which thou haſt left depending in iudgment: not the dutie of a ſonne, of a father, or of a friend, which thou pretendeſt thou wouldeſt performe: not the ambaſſage for the commō wealth, which thou wert euen ready to vndertake: not the ſeruice thou deſireſt to do vnto God, who knowes much better how to ſerue himſelfe of thee, then thou of thy ſelfe. It is thy houſes and gardens thou lamenteſt, thy imperfect plots and purpoſes, thy

life (as thou thinkeſt) imperfect: which by no dayes, nor yeares, nor ages, might be perfected: and yet thy ſelfe mighteſt perfect in a moment, couldeſt thou but thinke in good earneſt, that where it end it skils not, ſo that it end well.

Now to end well this life, is only to end it willingly: following with full conſent the will and direction of God, and not ſuffering vs to be drawne by the neceſſity of deſtinie. To end it willingly, we muſt hope, and not feare death. To hope for it, we muſt certainely looke after this life, for a better life. To looke for that, we muſt feare God: whom who ſo well feareth, feareth indeede nothing in this world, and hopes for all things in the other. To one well reſolued

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in these points death can be but sweete and agreeable: knowing that through it he is to enter into a place of all ioyes. The griefe that may be therein shall be allaied with sweetenesse: the sufferance of ill, swallowed in the confidence of good: the sting of Death it selfe shall be dead, which is nothing else but Feare. Nay, I will say more, not onely all the euils conceiued in death shall be to him nothing: but he shall euen scorne all the mishaps men reckonbe in this life, and laugh at all these terrours. For I pray what can he feare, whose death is his hope? Thinke we to banish him his countrey? He knowes he hath a countrey otherwhere, whence we can not banish him: and that all these countreyes

are but Innes, out of which he must part at the will of his host. To put him in prison? a more straite prison he cannot haue, then his owne body, more filthy, more darke, more full of rackes and torments. To kill him and take him out of the world? that is it he hopes for: that is it with all his heart he aspires vnto. By fire, by sword, by famine, by sickneſſe: within three yeares, within three dayes, within three houres, all is one to him: all is one at what gate, or at what time he passe out of this miserable life. For his businesses are euer ended, his affaires all dispatched, and by what way he shall go out, by the same he shall enter into a most happy and euerlasting life. Men can threaten him but death, and

and death is all he promiſeth himſelfe: the worſt they can do, is, to make him dye, and that is the beſt he hopes for. The threatnings of tyrants are to him promiſes, the ſwords of his greateſt enemies drawne in his fauour: for as much as he knowes that threatning him death, they threaten him life: and the moſt mortall wounds can make him but immortall: Who feares God, feares not death: and who feares it not, feares not the worſt of this life.

By this reckening, you will tell me death is a thing to be wiſhed for: and to paſſe from ſo much euill, to ſo much good, a man ſhould as it ſeemeth caſt away his life. Surely, I feare not, that for any good we expect, we will haſten

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one step the faster: though the spirit aspire, the body it draweswith it, withdrawes it euer sufficiently towards the earth. Yet is it not that I conclude. We must seeke to mortifie our flesh in vs, and to cast the world out of vs: but to cast our selues out of the world is in no sort permitted vs. The Christian ought willingly to depart out of this life, but not cowardly to runne away. The Christian is ordained by God to fight therein: and cannot leaue his place without incurring reproch and infamy. But if it please the graund Captaine to recall him, let him take the retrait in good part, and with good will obey it. For he is not borne for himselfe, but for God: of whom he holds his life at farme, as his tenant at will,

will, to yeeld him the profits. It is in the land-lord to take it from him, not in him to surrender it, when a conceit takes him. Dieſt thou yong? praiſe God as the mariner that hath had a good wind, ſoone to bring him to the Port. Dieſt thou old? praiſe him likewiſe, for if thou haſt had leſſe wind, it may be thou haſt alſo had leſſe waues. But thinke not at thy pleaſure to go faſter or ſofter: for the wind is not in thy power, & inſteed of taking the ſhorteſt way to the Hauen, thou maieſt happily ſuffer ſhipwrack. God calleth home from his worke, one in the morning, another at noone, and another at night. One he exerciſeth till the firſt ſweat, another he ſun-burneth, another he roſteth and drieth throughly. But of all his he leaues

all to reſt, and giues them all their hire, euery one in his time. Who leaues his worke before God call him, looſes it: and who importunes him before the time, looſes his reward. We muſt reſt vs in his will, who in the middeſt of our troubles ſets vs at reſt.

To ende, we ought neither to hate this life for the toiles therein, for it is ſlouth and cowardiſe: nor loue it for the delights, which is folly and vanity: but ſerue vs of it, to ſerue God in it, who after it ſhall place vs in true quietneſſe, and repleniſh vs with pleaſures which ſhall neuer more periſh. Neither ought we to flie death, for it is childiſh to feare it: and in flying from it, we meete it. Much leſſe to ſeeke it, for that is temerity: nor euery one that